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SOVIET STAFF STUDY

This study is a working paper prepared by the Soviet Staff, OCI, to assist Soviet Staff analysts in developing a common appreciation of some of the background factors affecting current intelligence trends in the Soviet field.

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ic. examination of all available information on the leading members of the Soviet hierarchy, their political associations, and the policies with which they have been identified.

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CUTOFF DATE: 20 Sept 1955

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN POLITICAL STATUS OF
SOVIET ARMED FORCES

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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN POLITICAL STATUS OF SOVIET
ARMED FORCES

PREFACE: Context and Purpose of Paper:

An examination of the political status of the Soviet armed forces during the period October 1952 to December 1953

led to the following conclusions.

- that the military has in the past revealed a relatively passive attitude toward internal crises with a tendency toward fragmentation and inaction.
- that military freedom of action is restricted in a number of ways: by interlocking networks of political and security officers operating within the ranks; by a tendency toward conformity among officers and men alike; by a growing officer caste system; and by the presence in the officer corps of a high percentage of Communists subject to party discipline.
- that in the post-Stalin period, the traditionally passive position of the military in politics shifted to a more active role, with the armed forces participating in the removal and sentencing of Beria.
- that by the end of 1953, the political position of the Soviet military leaders appeared better than it had for several years previously, and an uneasy alliance was probably maintained between top professional officers and Party leaders.

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the military leadership in the formulation of the Soviet governmental policy, there was practically no evidence of any formal change in the relationship of the military forces to other branches of the Soviet government. It was postulated that some cliques or groups of high-ranking officers had profited more than others by the changes in the regime and hence were more loyal to certain of the new political leaders, but very little evidence could be adduced to identify those military leaders who directly supported or were supported by one or another political faction.

It is the purpose of this paper to summarize all available information which would update the examination of the role of the Soviet military in politics and place in perspective the position of the military within the context of Soviet leadership. Questions concerning the control of the army, possible groupings within the military leadership, and the probable influence of the military on Soviet policy will be considered.

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I. Apparent Gains of Military Under Malenkov Premiership:

Certain gains which were to result in the greatly increased prestige of the military began to appear as early as July 1953. This may have been partly due to the support of the military in the Beria affair,¹ but may also have been due to the general conciliatory policy of the Malenkov regime. These gains took various forms: a certain relaxation of security within the armed forces; the introduction of a new military personnel policy; the granting of honors; a limited increase in the number of officers in government and party positions; the rehabilitation of disgraced officers; and the unfreezing of promotions and re-assignments.

A. Security Relaxation Among Military:

The earliest concession, apparent as early as August 1953, was the relaxation of security regulations among the Soviet troops in occupied countries. In contrast to their former prisonlike existence, troops (both officer and enlisted) were now permitted to fraternize with the local population, to purchase liquor, and to marry local nationals. In addition, officers of the rank of lieutenant and above were permitted to wear civilian clothes off duty and to bring their wives and children, of both preschool and school age, to the occupied countries. Schools with Soviet teachers were set up for officers' children. (Previously only high-ranking officers had been authorized to bring their wives, accompanied only by children of preschool age). Many of the privileges granted the enlisted men were to be later rescinded in certain areas because of the resulting misbehavior and crimes. It is not known who was responsible for this decision to relax security for the sake of morale. Although the Chief Political Directorate has the prime responsibility for troop morale, such a decision seems to go back to Zhukov, who, as a professional, would be fully aware of the effect of morale on fighting efficiency.

B. Introduction of New Military Personnel Policy:

The new military personnel policy apparently introduced about July 1953 aimed primarily at correcting the abuses prevalent under Stalin by stabilizing and standardizing induction methods, service, and demobilization measures. There had been gross violations of the 1939 Universal Military Service Law, which provided that army privates and junior officers (NCO's), after serving a two- and three-year term

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respectively, could be held in service only in case of need and for no more than a 2-month period.

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Standardized the term for army and air force conscripts at three years, and the publication since September 1953 of the Defense Ministry's annual mobilization order, ordering the release of all persons who had served the term established by law, seemed designed to prevent the recurrence of abuses.

Other aspects of the new policy included greater privileges for re-enlistees and a program to develop the leadership abilities of NCO's.

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[redacted] an attempt is underway to build up the leadership qualities of NCO's, who are now to be assigned as platoon leaders. The better educated conscripts are to be sent to military schools for three years instead of into military service; upon graduation, most of them will be placed in a junior officer (NCO) reserve. [redacted] substantiated by the stress on leadership of sergeants which has recently appeared in troop propaganda; and contrary to the general pattern of not mentioning a commander's name in broadcasts, the names of sergeants showing exemplary leadership qualities are now being mentioned.

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The responsibility for the adoption of this policy may lie with the military leaders, who probably recognized its relation to troop morale; however, it is conceivable that the political leadership, with its stress on legality in all spheres of Soviet life, encouraged the adoption of such a program.

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Military personnel policies achieved stabilization by about mid-1954, and since that date there have been no major shifts, although specific military requirements have evidently affected the length of service of certain critical specialties.¹

C. Glorification of Military Forces:

A tendency to glorify the military forces has become increasingly evident during the entire post-Stalin period. This flattery was undoubtedly intended to give the armed forces a sense of close identification with the regime and its political goals. This was revealed by Voroshilov, who, while handing out awards on one occasion during 1953, stated, "The awarding to you of orders and medals is graphic testimony of the love and concern with which our people, party and government surround their armed forces, and a manifestation of profound confidence in your staunchness and steadfastness." Although efforts were made by the Malenkov regime to appease other groups by the granting of awards, their honors were in no way as spectacular as those heaped upon the military. As a contrast to the Stalin period of slighting the military, this rising prestige took on added significance.

During the Malenkov period, 156 officers were singled out for honors, including 43 Orders of Lenin and 11 Orders of the Red Banner; in addition, on at least three occasions, awards have been made to unnamed "generals, admirals, and officers" of the armed forces.

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Busts of nine army officers who had twice won the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, including one of Marshal Zhukov, were unveiled during the Malenkov reign. Approximately 40 army officers are entitled to this honor, according to Soviet press. This was in marked contrast to the postwar period in which only a few of Stalin's known favorites, such as Marshal Konev and General Chuikov, were so honored. In addition, 14 memorials were erected to Soviet/Russian Military heroes.¹

1/ To honor traditional military heroes, a gigantic equestrian statue of Field Marshal Suvorov and a 100-foot statue of Admiral Nakhimov with telescope were unveiled; and, apparently as a special honor to the Ukrainians, a statue to Schors, the Bolshevik military hero from the Ukraine, was also dedicated. A total of 11 memorials, honoring the exploits of Russian and Soviet military heroes, nine of which were in the Orbit, were dedicated with Soviet and local dignitaries in attendance. These monuments were usually of immense size. In Norway and Egypt two monuments were erected by the USSR Ministry of Defense to honor Soviet/Russian fallen heroes. Incidentally, this number included a statue erected in honor of the 1939 defeat of the Japanese at Khalkhin-Gol, the battle in which Zhukov first won glory.

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Minor military anniversaries received more than customary publicity. The Soviet navy honored every possible anniversary, the majority of which had previously been unheralded.¹ Elements of the navy made much-publicized state visits to Finland, England, Turkey, and Sweden, as well as to certain Orbit countries.

In addition, graduations from military academies received unaccustomed publicity, and book exhibits and artillery exhibits showing the glorious history of the Soviet armed forces appeared.

A further manifestation of rising prestige was the fact that the uniform was made the special prerogative of the army. An order of August 1954 put civilians back into mufti. Army and air officers made their appearances in new uniforms of operatic splendor.

1/ These celebrations included, among others, the 100th anniversary of the defense of Sevastopol against the British and French in the Crimean war; the 240th anniversary of the Russian naval victory over Sweden near Gangut Island; the 100th anniversary of the defense of Petropavlovsk against Anglo-French forces; the 50th anniversary of the sinking of the Russian cruiser, "Varyag"; the 250th anniversary of the Kronstadt fortress; the 50th anniversary of the Russian naval commander Admiral Makarov; the anniversary of the victory over the Turks at Sinope.

D. Military Representation in Government/Party Positions:

In the elections to the Supreme Soviet in March 1954, a deputy from nearly every important military position was elected.¹ Of a total of 1,347 deputies elected in 1954, 70 were military officers as compared to 59 officers out of a total of 1,316 deputies elected in 1950. This is in contrast to a drop of approximately 60 percent in MVD representation.

That the electing of more military men to government positions, like the giving of awards, was meant to identify the military with the aims of the regime was indicated by a Pravda statement that "the elections to the Supreme Soviet have demonstrated with new force the boundless devotion of the Soviet fighters to their government and the Communist Party."

More officers than formerly were elected members of commissions of the Supreme Soviet.

- Army General M. V. Zakharov, Commander of Leningrad military district, to the Credentials Commission, Council of Nationalities.
- Army General A. S. Zheltov, Chief, Chief Political Directorate, to Commission on Draft Bills, Council of Union.
- Army General A. A. Grechko, Commander of Group of Soviet Forces, Germany, to Commission of Foreign Affairs, Council of Union.

Membership on these commissions is believed to be primarily a prestige position.

In February 1954, at various republic party congresses (exclusive, of course, of the RSFSR), the number of military officers elected to the republic central committees and buros was conspicuously greater than in the past. From the 10 republics where there are major troop headquarters, 32 military men, including the 11 military district commanders involved, were elected to the party central committees of their respective republics. With a few exceptions, all were elected full members. Although the actual military representation increased, the significance is lessened somewhat by the fact that the size of the republic central committees was in general increased; military representation on the various republic central committees varies from none (in republics where there are no troop concentrations) to five percent (in the Ukraine).

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Of the 11 military district commanders involved in the areas affected by the elections, nine were chosen as members of their republic buros.¹

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the giving of an increasing number of important party and government jobs to the military was an original move of Malenkov, designed to subject the military to party discipline in a more fundamental sense by increasing their responsibility to the Party.

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E. Rehabilitation of Disgraced Officers:

The regime's attempt to correct some of the wrongs suffered under Stalin was probably responsible for the rehabilitation of a number of military officers, some of whom are known to have undergone imprisonment. Stalin's jealousy of the glory justly earned by the military during the war led him to degrade, on various charges, the outstanding leaders of all services. Although Stalin's death brought Zhukov's public re-appearance in Moscow² and restored the naval chief Kuznetsov to his original rank of fleet admiral, the most remarkable restoration to favor occurred in the

1/ Mention should be made of the two military district commanders who were not elected. This occurred in the Ukraine, which encompasses four military districts. Of the four military district commanders, two (Konev and Chuikov) were elected bureau members. To elect all four Ukrainian military district commanders to an 11-man body would have given the military a quite disproportionate representation.

2/ There is reason to believe that Zhukov was back in Moscow as early as 1950, possibly taking the place vacated by Konev as Commander in Chief of Ground Forces. His return was not publicized.

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case of air officers. At the end of World War II, practically all the top commanders of the various air forces had been sent into obscurity. During 1953 and 1954, various disgraced air officers, with their original ranks restored, were given awards and medals "for long years of service." Those honored included the following who are listed with the positions held during the last war:

- Chief Marshal of Aviation A. A. Novikov, Commander in Chief, Military Air Forces,
- Marshal of Aviation G. A. Vorozheikin, 1st deputy Commander in Chief, Military Air Forces.
- Marshal of Aviation N. S. Skripko, Chief of Staff, Long Range Bomber Forces.

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- Col. Gen. A. I. Shakurin, head of aviation industry.
- Col. Gen. A. K. Repin, Chief Engineer of the Military Air Forces.
- Col. Gen. N. S. Shimanov, Political deputy, Military Air Forces.
- Col. Gen. M. I. Samokhin, Commander, Baltic Fleet Air Force.

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F. Increased Number of Military Promotions and Reassignments:

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The relaxation of the virtual freeze on officer promotions which had existed under Stalin's regime [redacted] including two promotions to the rank of marshal and six to army general. In addition, certain other promotions have been noted since 1953, and have presumably been accompanied by unpublicized promotions in lower ranks. Among the more interesting have been those of N. I. Vinogradov to admiral and M. A. Shalin to colonel general. Vinogradov, a deputy to the Commander in Chief of the Naval Forces, holds the title of Commander of Submarines of the USSR and his promotion is presumably related to the increased attention to the submarine program. Shalin is head of the Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff.

The greater relaxation of security under Malenkov, so unlike the secrecy of the Stalin regime, revealed a fluid situation relating to officer reassignments. The more important changes, other than the public return of Zhukov, affected the following positions:

- Chief of Chief Political Directorate
(with the Air and Navy political chiefs also undergoing changes)
- Chief of DOSAAF [redacted]
- Chief, Airborne Troops
- Commander in Chief of Administration
of Armored Troops [redacted]
- Deputy Commander in Chief of Naval
Forces
- Chief of Frunze Military Academy
- CinC of Soviet Forces in Germany
- CinC of Central Group of Forces
[redacted]

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-- Commanders of four of the five fleets¹

The greatest number of changes has occurred in the military districts. Of the 24 military districts existing at the time of Satlin's death, only three still have the same commanders. Of these changing commands, two military district commanders moved into the Defense Ministry, one (Konev) became the commander of the Soviet bloc combined command, three were reassigned as commanders of other military districts; one was assigned as chief of Soviet Forces in Germany, and four lost their jobs when their military district headquarters were abolished. Of the commanders affected, only one--Artemyev--is definitely known to have suffered disgrace.

The significance of these promotions and replacements and their possible relation to the Soviet political situation will be considered later.

G. Check on Military Gains:

In spite of the blandishments, honors and flattery heaped upon the armed forces under Malenkov, efforts were made to keep their popularity under control. Military men were not given significantly greater access to the public. No speech by a military candidate was broadcast over Radio Moscow. Bulganin, a political marshal, reviewed the parades and gave the addresses on the most important military anniversaries in both 1953 and 1954 (1 May and 7 November); it was customary previously to have professional soldiers take these honors. In general, the voice of the military was heard only in connection with military anniversaries, with one exception where propaganda purposes were served--the letters of Vasilevski and Zhukov berating Montgomery and Churchill for allegedly ordering the stacking of German arms after World War II for possible reissue to the Germans for use against the Soviets.

II. Apparent Losses suffered by Military under Malenkov:

The most obvious loss was the reduction in funds available for military purposes as provided under the 1953/1954 budgets. This cut was apparently necessary to finance Malenkov's consumer goods program. The 1953 budget revealed a leveling off of military expenditures: the announced defense expenditures for 1953 were 110.2 billion rubles as compared to 108.6 billion rubles for 1952. This represented a rate of increase for military expenditures of less than 2 percent, as compared to increases of well over 10 percent per year since 1950. Under the 1954 Soviet budget the announced allocation for military purposes was 103.3 billion rubles, a decrease of 9 percent from 1953.

A. Administrative Consolidations in Defense Ministry:

The Defense Ministry, as all sectors of the Soviet government, was affected by the reorganization instituted by the Malenkov government after Stalin's death. This program attempted to reduce expenditures, to improve efficiency, and to transfer an estimated million workers from the administrative to the productive sectors of the economy.

The first changes in the military services took the form of consolidation of certain administrative headquarters, with resulting reduction of functions and personnel. Four of the 24 military district headquarters, an intermediate echelon headquarters, and a fleet headquarters were probably

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abolished.¹ It is reasonable to assume that some economy measures took place in all military district headquarters.

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The demobilization of a percentage of the officer personnel was undertaken for reasons of economy and efficiency: to reduce the office complement and to weed out the semiliterate officers who had been commissioned during the war. An attempt at fairness was made, as efficiency ratings and experience

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time to assess the effect of these retirements on officer morale.

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There apparently was some reduction in enlisted personnel, although the extent cannot be determined. The number of soldiers released in 1953 was probably greater than usual, for it included not only the regular class but also those who had previously been held in service beyond the term required by law.

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the US embassy noticed soldiers, obviously just released, in the harvest fields as early as August. The demobilized soldiers were closely tied in with the new agricultural program and the opening of the new lands. As early as September 1953, Moscow papers reported that released soldiers were pledging their support to the program. There are numerous reports suggesting the pressure on releasees to go to the new lands. Military divisions, as units, were assigned as patrons of certain state farms with the responsibility of keeping them supplied with manpower.

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D. Effect of Malenkov's Economic Policy on Military:

It cannot definitely be stated how the military leadership reacted to the retrenchment policies of 1953 and early 1954. The evidence on retrenchment itself shows only the direction of change, without providing an accurate measure of its extent. It suggests peripheral reductions and economies without any serious reduction in the combat capabilities of the Soviet field forces. This conclusion is supported by other evidence that programs for re-equipping and reorganizing Soviet military forces proceeded in orderly fashion all through the period of changing political leadership.

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The changes in personnel policy and administrative consolidations came at a time when the Soviet military leaders apparently had achieved greater freedom to manage the affairs of their own establishment [redacted] changes may in large part reflect the attempt of Soviet military leaders to systematize personnel policy and weed out inefficient or surplus personnel, especially noncombatants, who had hung on since the end of World War II. Such a program was undoubtedly favored by the Malenkov regime in its desire to further its agricultural and consumer goods programs and to cut unnecessary costs wherever possible. It may also have been in part the price paid by the military leaders to increase the effectiveness of their forces despite budgetary restrictions.

III. Role of Military in Light versus Heavy Industry Dispute and Fall of Malenkov:

In attempting to determine the role of the military leadership in the light versus heavy industry dispute and the fall of Malenkov, it is necessary to consider certain questions: Had the military been pressuring the leadership for increased military preparedness? Did Khrushchev and his followers woo the support of the military for their cause? Or did the viewpoints of the two groups happen to coincide on the necessity of increased military strength?

A. Probable Dissatisfaction of Military:

Despite the gains achieved under Malenkov, there are reasons to believe that the military leaders may have been unhappy in 1954. They may have become convinced that Malenkov was jeopardizing the safety of the country by his readjustment of the economy and by what was thought to be the failure of his foreign policy. They were surely uneasy about the imminent rearming of Germany; the growing strength of the West and the diplomatic success of its position of strength; the possibility of their Chinese ally becoming involved in new military risks; the increased military needs of the Satellites and China, particularly as they related to the proposed Soviet counterpart to NATO. Such considerations may have forced the military to desire other leadership.

In contrast to Malenkov, Khrushchev and his followers, disappointed in a conciliatory foreign policy and believing through conviction and experience that military strength as an adjunct to diplomacy should play a major role in foreign affairs, argued for the need of increased military preparedness.

There are hints that throughout 1954 there may have been a running argument on military preparedness.

concluded that the members were apparently divided into two groups on the question of allocation of funds to the armed forces: the more militant group (Bulganin, Khrushchev, Kaganovich) which consistently emphasized Western aggressiveness in order to keep military expenditure at a high level; and the non-aggressive group (Malenkov, Saburov, Pervukhin) which was inclined to consider the financial needs of other sectors of the economy at the expense of the military.

B. Military Aspects of Dispute:

Three developments point to the fact that military considerations were closely bound up to the light versus heavy industry dispute:

- the pointed relation in public statements of heavy industry priority to defense needs, emphasizing the necessity for such priority to maintain the defensive capability of the country;
- during the height of the dispute, propaganda related to the necessity of military preparedness was intensified;
- changes stressing increased military strength occurred immediately before and after Malenkov's fall, both within the USSR and the bloc.

Although in general during 1954 Soviet leaders urged the continuing development of heavy industry, the defense-related aspect did not receive as much emphasis as later during the dispute. Only Bulganin was to refer consistently to the defense aspect; this has led to speculation that he may have been acting as a bridge for the military viewpoint. In his election speech of February 1954, he gave particular attention to heavy industry. "The basis for a further upsurge of our national economy always has been and remains heavy industry...heavy industry is the foundation of the invincible defensive ability of the country and the might of our gallant armed forces." Phrases such as these were to be much in evidence during the subsequent argument over heavy versus light industry.

In the propaganda field, the stress on military preparedness was exemplified during this period by two trends:

- increased references to "surprise attack" with its connotation of "Be Prepared";

-- the reappearance of the theme that war would destroy only capitalism, repudiating Malenkov's previous stand.

Immediately preceding and following Malenkov's removal as premier, concrete indications of an emphasis on increased military strength became evident. The 1955 Soviet budget, announced in February, revealed that the Soviet government intended to return to the 1952-53 level of appropriations for defense. The budget allocated 112.1 billion rubles for explicit military expenditures, a 12-percent increase over the 1954 allocation. If the allocation is completely utilized, these expenditures would be at a postwar high.

A shift in Soviet economic policy regarding military preparedness may have been reflected in the government changes of 28 February 1955. The elevation of V. A. Malyshev to a supraministerial position in charge of a group of ministries in the machine building field may indicate added attention to the armament field. The appointment of Khrunichev, an individual connected with the aviation industry, to the rank of deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers points to increased attention to this side of the defense picture. The background of P. N. Goremykin, named 3 April 1955 as head of the newly created Ministry of General Machine Building, hints that the new ministry may be dealing with guided missiles.

Within the bloc, military preparedness was suggested by the setting up of the much-publicized combined Soviet-Satellite military command under the Warsaw Agreement of 14 May 1955. Although the propaganda value of such a move, proclaiming the unity and determination of the "peace camp," was paramount, military gains were also achieved. The creation of a permanent staff, composed of representatives of the staffs of the participating countries, probably constituted an administrative improvement over the previous Soviet system of bilateral control over Satellite military activities. The location of the headquarters in Moscow and the appointment of a Soviet officer as commander will provide firm Soviet control over day-to-day operations.

C. Conclusions on Military Role in Malenkov Fall:

It is believed that the armed forces leaders contributed to the pressure on Malenkov, probably because of their dissatisfaction with his policies and not because of any desire to seize power or to increase their own power. It is also quite possible that Khrushchev's followers did seek the support of the military leaders, but it is extremely doubtful if the military were the primary power factor in bringing about the change. It appears most likely that these two dissatisfied groups (i.e., the military and Khrushchev's followers) were brought together, without the necessity of too much wooing on either side, by similar viewpoints on the failure of Malenkov's policy and the necessity of increased military strength.¹

IV. Position of Military under Khrushchev/Bulganin Leadership:

A. Review of important developments since Malenkov's demotion:

The governmental reorganization which followed the demotion of Malenkov in February 1955 brought significant changes in the top leadership of the Soviet armed forces. Marshal Zhukov moved on 9 February into the position of minister of defense, which had been vacated by Bulganin's rise to premier. This was the first time since 1949 that a professional military officer headed the combined armed forces of the USSR².

2/ During the previous period of unification (1946-1950), Bulganin, a political marshal, was Minister of Armed Forces from 1946 until March 1949, when Marshal Vasilevsky, a professional officer, took over.

Although the influence of the professional military leadership in the government rose to a new high with Zhukov's appointment, the political leaders took pains to keep the power of the military well within definite limits. No representative of the professional military class was promoted in February or subsequently to the highest policy-making bodies of the USSR--the Presidium of the Party Central Committee or the Presidium of the Council of Ministers. In the Party Presidium, which presumably holds the final voice on policy matters, the armed forces will continue to be represented by Bulganin, a non-professional. Although recent events suggest that some decision-making power may now have been extended to the Party Central Committee, the percentage of military figures in the Central Committee does not give them a decisive voice in that body. Of the 125 full members of the Central Committee, who would have the voting privilege, only 8 (or 6.4 percent) are military officers, and this number includes three who would be considered nonprofessionals--Bulganin, Voroshilov, and Brezhnev. Only 20 military officers are included in the list of candidate members of the Central Committee.

That the new leadership was willing to permit a further rise in military prestige was shown in a variety of ways:

- the continued glorification of the armed forces through the granting of awards, dedication of monuments, announced planned publication of works on military subjects, etc.
- the exploitation of the popularity of military officers by making greater use of them as policy spokesmen.
- the rather obvious efforts of the leadership to show the unity of the party-government-military leadership, such as the attendance at Govorov's funeral in March 1955 and the telecast of Zhukov-Bulganin-Khrushchev for Armed Forces Day in February 1955.

- the ostentatious mass promotion of several officers to the highest ranks in the USSR in March 1955.
- the granting of greater latitude of public expression to military officers on military subjects-- even problems of grand strategy.

On 11 March 1955, six officers were promoted to the rank of Marshal of the Soviet Union and five to the rank of chief marshal or marshal of a special arm or service. This was the largest simultaneous promotion to these high ranks ever made in the USSR. At special ceremonies, Voroshilov presented the marshal's star and patent to the newly created marshals, plus the two highest-ranking naval officers.¹

Certain high military officers in their turn contributed publicly to enhancing the reputation of the post-Malenkov political leadership, by acclaiming a select list of Party leaders who allegedly contributed most to the Soviet military effort in World War II. A recent study has found that during the weeks immediately following Malenkov's resignation, six different military leaders paid public tribute to the part in winning the war played by Khrushchev, Bulganin and the deceased Zhdanov and Shcherbakov.² Those military men who spoke out in such fashion included Konev, Bagramyan, Zheltov, Moskovsky (the editor of Red Star) and several lesser figures. The use of selected listings of this type had already played a part in the discrediting of Malenkov, although military leaders had not been important as public participants.

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The presence of naval officers reveals an incident of interservice jealousy in the Soviet armed forces. Shortly after the mass promotion, it was made public that the highest naval rank had been changed from "admiral of the fleet" to "admiral of the fleet of the Soviet Union." This change was apparently designed to correct any popular misunderstanding that the highest naval title might be inferior to the highest army title, although, according to Soviet field service regulations, the two titles had always been of equal rank.

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During 1955 a total of 80 literary works on military subjects will be issued by the Military Publishing Office, according to a TASS announcement of 9 May 1955. Of special interest is the fact that the series is to include a number of books about outstanding military leaders of the last war. Soviet writers have been instructed to write more books for children about the army and to make them as romantic and inspiring as possible.

At a Moscow conference of the Union of Soviet Writers held in late May, in which the Defense Ministry participated, public requests were made for less censorship of military writing, more accuracy in reporting, emphasis on better biographies of prominent military leaders, and, most significantly, a revision of the Stalinist versions of military history and strategic military doctrine which had developed during World War II. A discussion of basic strategic doctrine this spring revealed a new practice of public appraisal of world-wide military developments, in contrast to the practice during the Stalin era of airing only those opinions which conformed to the military views of Stalin. Recent public statements by Soviet military officers have challenged the military genius of Stalin by calling for a reappraisal of the traditional emphasis of those "permanently operating factors" in warfare which had been stressed by Stalin as being the decisive elements for victory and by asking for more consideration of the significance of the element of "surprise attack."¹

During the late spring and summer of 1955, as the extremely active Khrushchev-Bulganin foreign policy unfolded, Soviet military forces at home and abroad were used as an important bargaining element

^{1/} The five "permanently operating factors" which determine the outcome of war are, according to Stalinist military science: stability of the rear, morale of the army, the quantity and quality of divisions, the armament of the army, and the organizing ability of the command personnel.

in the regime's campaign for relaxation of international tensions. In contrast to the militancy of the period around the time of Malenkov's resignation, the Soviet leadership embarked on a program of concessions in which military leaders were prominent instruments.

The rapid series of foreign policy moves affecting the military establishment began with the Soviet agreement in May to end the occupation of Austria. Following final ratification of the Austrian treaty in July, Soviet forces began to withdraw in August, and the withdrawal was virtually completed by early September. Bulganin used this withdrawal at the Geneva conference as the opening gambit in a series of moves designed to prove to the West that the Soviet military threat had evaporated, when he announced that the total strength of the Soviet military establishment would be reduced by an amount equivalent to the strength of the forces withdrawn from Austria.

This was followed within a month by the dramatic Soviet announcement that as a result of the "relaxation of international tensions" following Geneva, the Soviet armed forces would be reduced in size by a total of 640,000,000 men (estimated to be approximately 16 percent of total military manpower) by 15 December. All the European Satellites except East Germany, which has no official military force, have since followed suit with promises of military manpower reductions of roughly similar scope.

A continuation of such moves was foreshadowed by a toast delivered by Khrushchev in Bucharest on 25 August, in which he stated that the announced Soviet reduction was "not our last word" on the subject of international accord, and that if Soviet actions are followed by similar Western actions, the USSR will "continue to march on this road."

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A further Soviet concession involving military forces abroad was made on 17 September, when the USSR agreed to return its base at Porkkala to Finland.

The degree of participation by Soviet military leaders in these decisions is not definitely known, and there is very little information on which to base a hypothesis regarding their role. Marshal Zhukov, as defense minister, logically signed the proclamations regarding the removal of Soviet forces from Austria and the reduction in over-all military manpower. Zhukov himself was one of the four leading Soviet figures at Geneva, despite the fact that his position in the Soviet governmental structure was lower than that of many persons not included in the delegation, although his presence may well be explained by his previous close association with President Eisenhower. At a private luncheon with the President at Geneva, Zhukov is reported to have dwelt at length on the "collegiality" of present-day Soviet decision-making. Following the announcement of the intended evacuation of Porkkala, Zhukov took occasion to inform Western press correspondents that "we decided that the time has come to liquidate our bases in general," and "the sooner the West follows suit the better." (In this statement, Zhukov repeated a theme emphasized by him in an interview with Western correspondents on 7 February 1955, just prior to his appointment as defense minister.)

It must be emphasized that the use of military leaders and military forces as instruments of the present conciliatory Soviet foreign policy does not imply that the Soviet leadership is in its own estimation reducing its over-all preparedness effort. The increased military budget announced in February apparently remains in force, and the statements of last winter regarding the need for a strong defense have in no way been retracted. The "concessions" that have been announced refer only to aggregate manpower and to bases of relatively little military significance. The Soviet estimate, concurred in by the military, may well be that the realities of modern warfare are such that other factors of

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military strength (e.g., nuclear weapons and the means of delivering them) now outweigh sheer manpower strength, some of which can be channeled to economic production. It is too early to tell what means the USSR will use to implement its announced troop reduction, but many possibilities are available which would minimize its significance to overall Soviet military capabilities. It is, moreover, quite possible that the 1955 announcement is in part an attempt to take belated credit for some of the reductions which took place in 1953 and 1954. Thus there is at present little reason to suppose that the concessions of the summer of 1955 would have met with serious objections by informed military leaders.

B. Party Control in the Armed Forces:

The enormous prestige and improved status now enjoyed by the military raises the question of their control in the future. Despite the impressive gains of the armed forces, the traditional party and security controls remain, and there are reasons to believe that the leadership will attempt to keep them as effective as in the past.

It is possible that Party and Komsomol membership in the military has increased recently. Molotov in his 8 February 1954 speech to the Supreme Soviet said that, for every 100 men in the army, there were 77 Party or Komsomol members. Earlier, in October 1952, Marshal Vasilevsky had stated that 86.4 percent of the officers and generals were Party or Komsomol members. As most of the senior officers have long been nominal Party members, it is doubtful if Party membership among the officer class has increased appreciably. Assuming the statements mentioned above refer only to the army and assuming a 2,500,000-man army with a 12 percent officer component, this would indicate that approximately 75 percent of the enlisted men are either Party or Komsomol members. On the other hand, if the above statements refer to the armed forces as a whole and assuming a force of 4,000,000 with the same officer percentage, the number of Party and Komsomol members among the enlisted men would be 61 percent of the total.

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Party figures are not available to ascertain if this represents a substantial increase in Party and Komsomol membership. It is doubtful if more than a few percent of the enlisted men are Party members as most of them are in the age group for Komsomol membership (26 and under). In view of the emphasis being placed on NCO leadership, however, it is possible that more NCO's are now being admitted to the Party than formerly. In regard to Komsomol membership [REDACTED]

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heavy pressure is exerted on soldiers to join; and that as a result practically all the troops have at least gone through the formality of taking out membership.¹ It appears that the Komsomol organization in the armed forces underwent a reorganization in the fall of 1954, but details are not available. A broadcast of the armed forces radio service, in September 1954, spoke of the conversion of the Komsomol organization to a "new structure" with organizational meetings being held for that purpose in various armed forces units.

In the matter of Party control of officers, a more liberal approach has been noted. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] the compulsory curricula of political training were relaxed in 1954, so that members of a military Party cell, instead of following prescribed study assignments as in the past, were permitted to use their initiative in the choice of studies. The deputies for political matters were to supervise the courses and to evaluate the work of

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each member.¹ Evidence of the truth of this report has appeared in Soviet military publications. In Red Star, 22 March 1955, reference was made to the "putting into practice of the principle of voluntariness in party enlightenment." The article pointed out that during the current training year, many officers have raised their ideological-political level by "independent" study; but unfortunately, the article continues, many of these officers had had insufficient experience in independent study. The article goes on to criticize political organs and Party bureaus which very superficially fulfilled their responsibilities for resolving the difficulties of the officers.

Certain concessions appear to have been made to improve the position of the commander for the sake of military discipline; but these gains have been partially nullified by saddling the commanders with a greater sense of Party responsibility. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] members of a military party cell may not criticize their commander, as such action might undermine military discipline; official complaints of the military are forwarded not through political channels but through military channels; the position of political officer extended as of 1954 down only to battalion level, whereas formerly it was found through company level, with the commander assuming political duties on lower levels.

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1/ The new emphasis on independence in political activities has its parallel in the tactical field. Officers are now encouraged to use initiative with the service regulations only as a guide, whereas formerly strict obedience to regulations was expected. Earlier in this paper mention was made of the leadership program among the NCO's. It is tempting to speculate on the long-range effects of such policy innovations--whether initiative and leadership can be localized only in the channels desired by the Party.

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The numerous references to strengthening "one-man command" show a continuing sensitivity on this subject. For example, Red Star in February 1955 spoke of the necessity "to explain more thoroughly the instructions of the Party in the matter of one-man command." It is not known whether this refers to some recent instructions or whether it is an amplification of earlier directives on the subject. [redacted] the political officers lost their command powers in 1942. Nevertheless, their continued interference in command functions caused a directive to be issued in 1951 limiting their work strictly to the political field. It would appear that the professional military officers are particularly watchful for any encroachment in the command field.

There are hints of a more sophisticated approach to this problem of unity of command. The political officers are to be kept definitely out of the command field, which is the acknowledged bailiwick of the professional soldiers, but the commander is to be made increasingly aware of the fact that the final responsibility for the political education of his troops rests with him. Political and military training are considered to be of equal value. There have been a number of references to this dual responsibility of the commander in the military and political field, as illustrated by a rather flattering quotation from an article, dated February 1955, by the editor of Red Star: "One of the most important measures of the Party and government introduced into the Soviet armed forces in recent years is the strengthening of unity of command. This raised the authority of commanders still higher and improved discipline and order in troop units. Our army and navy have at their disposal the most experienced cadres of officers and generals, persons who are selflessly dedicated to the motherland, and who are capable of training and educating troops in conformity with present-day requirements. The most valuable commanders are those who skillfully combine their combat activity with the political and military training of their subordinates."

That greater freedom of expression on the whole problem of political control in the armed forces is now permitted is indicated by the appearance in Red Star in January 1955 of an article with the rather startling title, "Party Work Should Be Subordinated to the Interests of the Unit's Battle-Readiness."

C. Security Control in the Armed Forces:

The military counterintelligence apparatus, now controlled by the KGB, is believed to be as active as formerly in ferreting out any "subversive" activities of the military. It is doubtful that the security police lost much of their investigative power by the execution of Beria and the reorganization of the security apparatus. Public criticism was directed not against the police system per se, but against the previous leadership and its methods of operations. Both former deputy MGB minister Ryumin and former MGB minister Abakumov were executed for their alleged extralegal use of police power. The security apparatus has been definitely subordinated to the Party and limitations have been imposed on its indiscriminate use, but the police organs survive with their voluminous files and vast network of informers.

Stalin always maintained control of the security apparatus and now Khrushchev appears to be using his influence to assign his followers to the KGB. The chairman of the KGB and his two identified deputies are known to have had previous associations with Khrushchev. This may indicate that Khrushchev now commands loyalties in the KGB and is therefore influential in its operations. It is unnecessary to emphasize that Khrushchev and the KGB, aware of the enormous prestige of the military, would be particularly watchful for any evidence of independent thinking or acting on the part of the armed forces or individuals within it.

D. Control of Zhukov:

In considering the problem of army control, attention must be paid to the personality of Zhukov. He is unique for several reasons: his professional competence; his ability to inspire almost fanatical loyalty among his followers; his position as the most popular figure in the USSR, both with the populace and the armed forces; and a certain independence of mind.

There is no reason to question his loyalty, either to the Party or to the government. He, like many of the more prominent Soviet officers, has long been a member of the Party, which he joined in 1919. Most of his speeches have followed the general policy line of the moment, although with notable moderation of phraseology. His letter attacking Montgomery and Churchill in December 1954

was undoubtedly written at the bidding of the Party and was in terms so vitriolic as to appear to have been written by someone else. In his speech for V-E Day, 1955, he duly gave credit to the Party as the inspirer and organizer of victory. Nevertheless, certain hints of independent thinking have appeared, particularly with reference to his concept of atomic war. There is reason to believe that he may share a viewpoint as to the effects of a third world war more nearly in accord with the opinion expressed by Malenkov in March 1954.

On 9 May 1954, Zhukov in his first Pravda article after his return to prominence stated that "war means heavy losses for both sides"; this was the closest approach by any top Soviet figure to Malenkov's thesis of destruction-of-world-civilization. In a February 1955 interview with Hearst reporters, Zhukov again used this theme, stating that "atomic war is just as dangerous to the attacker as to the attacked." Although Zhukov, in his 23 February address on Armed Forces Day, made no allusion to possible Soviet losses in a new war, he failed to reassert forcefully the theme that a new world war would destroy capitalism alone. This reticence appeared unusual in view of the blunt repudiation of Malenkov's thesis by Molotov on 8 February and by Voroshilov on 26 March, as well as the presence of this theme in the Soviet press at that time. In his V-E Day 1955 Pravda article, Zhukov wrote: "One has to be surprised at the fact that big military experts -- and especially those of Britain -- have such an irresponsible attitude toward the problems of atomic and hydrogen war. We, the military, realize more clearly than anyone else the extremely devastating nature of such a war."

Zhukov has been described as an ardent nationalist who is intensely interested in the defense of his country. He may have favored the more conciliatory foreign policy of Malenkov; however, the failure of this policy plus the imminent rearmament

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of Germany might have thrown him on the side of those advocating greater military preparedness at the time of Malenkov's removal.

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His personal correspondence with President Eisenhower and his letter to the Overseas Press Club of 20 April were undoubtedly efforts to reduce tension. In his letter to the Overseas Press Club, he expressed certainty that the President would do everything in his power to give practical aid to the cause of peace, stating that "new efforts are now needed to avoid further aggravation of international tension. He also remarked that while "some politicians would like to instill the idea that war is inevitable, the common people of the world do not want bombs dropped on their homes." In this letter Zhukov referred to the destruction that a new war might bring to "children, mothers and wives" in "New York or Moscow, London or Paris."

His appointment as defense minister may well have been to increase the popularity of the party and government at a time when a more austere internal policy was to be reintroduced. Although by his appointment his prestige has increased significantly, his power is limited. He was elected a full member of the Party Central Committee in mid-1953, but he has not been elevated to the Presidium of the Party Central Committee, which is considered the final policy-making body in the USSR. Nor was he elected to the Presidium of the Council of Ministers, whose responsibilities presumably include some policy-making functions. He is one of the more than 50 ministers who form the Council of Ministers.

It was previously mentioned that the KGB would continue to restrain any ambitions to power on the part of the military. Mention should be made of the relations between Zhukov and the man apparently

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handpicked by Khrushchev to be head of the KGB, I. A. Serov, whose promotion to Army General was revealed in August 1955. According to reports, Zhukov and Serov, who were both in East Germany following World War II, thoroughly disliked each other. At that time, Serov was purging anti-Soviet elements in the Soviet Zone of Germany. Reports indicate that their paths may also have crossed at a later date. Serov was sent as an MVD officer to the Ukraine; at that time Zhukov was military district commander at Odessa (Ukraine). In 1948, Zhukov was dispatched into semiobscurity to the Urals.

There are also indications that the party leadership is taking steps to hold Zhukov's prestige within bounds by building up Marshal Ivan Konev as a possible counterweight to Zhukov and by belittling Zhukov's wartime successes.

E. Buildup of Konev as Counterweight to Zhukov:

Marshal Konev, although stationed outside of Moscow from 1952 to 1955, was at the center of several major political controversies in recent years. He was named as a Doctors' Plot victim in January 1953; he reportedly took part with Zhukov and Bulganin in the arrest of Beria in June 1953; and he served as chairman of the special session of the Supreme Court which tried Beria and his associates.¹

On 8 February 1955, he acted as spokesman for the armed forces at the Supreme Soviet session. He was also picked to write the Pravda article for Armed Forces Day, 23 February 1955, in which he singled out Khrushchev for special attention. In

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doing this, he departed from the customary alphabetical listing of wartime political officers to name Khrushchev ahead of Bulganin, Zhdanov, and Shcherbakov. His Pravda article was the most widely broadcast commentary of the anniversary; in contrast, Zhukov's speech, which had been televised, was not broadcast and only a brief summary appeared in Pravda.

Konev was again chosen to give the main address at the 1955 V-E celebration at the Bolshoi Theatre, the first time such ceremonies had been held on this date. His speech, which has been characterized as being particularly Stalinist, was given unusual prominence. Again he set Khrushchev apart from the other political officers by stating, "Comrade Khrushchev, comrades Bulganin, etc."

It is noteworthy that two other military figures, Bagramyan and Zheltov, subsequently copied Konev's technique of listing Khrushchev before Bulganin, although they did not go so far as to separate Khrushchev from the others listed.

Konev, described as an ardent Communist and a devoted friend of Stalin, joined the party in 1917 and was active in organizational work. He began his military career as a political commissar. He was elected a candidate member of the Central Committee, CPSU, in 1949, achieving full membership in October 1952. Since his assignment in 1952 to the Ukraine, he has been active in Ukrainian party affairs. The Germans described Konev, whom they nicknamed "Butcher" because of his heavy troop losses, as "more of a politician than a soldier."

Konev was picked by Khrushchev to accompany him to Warsaw on two occasions in 1955: the anniversary of the Soviet-Polish Treaty of Friendship and the anniversary of the liberation of Poland.

Konev was identified in April as a deputy minister of defense, only to be named in May as the commander of the Soviet-Satellite combined forces.

Little is known of the personal relationship between Konev and Zhukov. During World War II, Konev participated in military operations coordinated by Zhukov, serving in the defense of Moscow and the reconquest of the Ukraine. Zhukov's apparent confidence in Konev as a military commander is indicated by the fact that in the drive from Warsaw to Berlin, Zhukov, then personally commanding a front as well as co-ordinating all activities in the area, consistently kept Konev on his left flank. One area of conflict between the two has been reported: Konev allegedly favored strengthening the political control system in the armed forces in contrast to Zhukov's insistence on strict one-man command of units. There may be professional jealousy between the two, since Konev succeeded Zhukov as commander in chief of the ground forces in 1946 when Zhukov was reduced to a military district commander.

In the build-up accompanying Konev's appointment as commander of the combined Soviet-Satellite forces, wartime history was distorted to challenge the pre-eminent position of Zhukov. Perhaps the most revealing exaggeration of Konev's position was carried in a Polish newspaper the day after his appointment: "The figure of Marshal Ivan Konev, twice Hero of the Soviet Union, commander of the First Ukrainian Front during the war, conqueror of Berlin, and liberator of Prague, is growing to the dimensions of a symbol -- the symbol of the invincible might of the Soviet army and of our entire camp." (ZYCIE WARSZAWY, 15 May 1955).

This quotation distorted facts by ignoring the major role of Zhukov in the conquest of Berlin; furthermore, the only military figure in the USSR who could approach the stature of a symbol is Marshal Zhukov. There were similar distortions in the speeches of various Satellite Party

and government leaders, which magnified Konev's wartime role at the expense of Zhukov.

A biography of Konev (Moscow, News, No. 11, 1955) further disparages the military record of Zhukov. This article stated that Konev's forces "in coordination with those of Gen. N. F. Vatutin (deceased), routed and smashed Hitler's Belgorod-Kharkov grouping. Then followed the sweep across the Ukraine, during which Vatutin and Konev executed the famous Korsun - Shevchenkivskii operation, the "Second Stalingrad." From May 1944 onward, Konev's forces inflicted major defeats on the Nazis in Poland and Czechoslovakia, and it was his troops, in conjunction with those of the First Belorussian Front, which took Berlin on 2 May 1945. The concluding operation of the war, the thrust into the Ore Mountains of Czechoslovakia, was also the work of Konev, and it was highly characteristic of his type of generalship." In this write-up, it is completely overlooked that Zhukov as the representative of STAVKA (General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander) co-ordinated all the ground and air activities of the operations referred to; operations such as these usually involved two to four fronts with a total of ten to twelve armies, plus air support. In addition, Zhukov had personal command of the First Belorussian Front.

A Pravda article on 2 May 1955 by General V. I. Chuikov on the battle of Berlin not only failed to give Zhukov credit for planning and co-ordinating all operations, but distorted truth to give Konev and Rokossovsky equal credit with Zhukov for the Berlin capture. Rokossovsky's contribution was, in fact, indirect, as he remained in northern Poland and northern Germany when Zhukov and Konev rushed from Warsaw to Berlin.

In a recent broadcast on a military exhibit in Moscow, Zhukov's part in the battle of Stalingrad was completely ignored, although he was the STAVKA representative who planned the operation and was in the field during the German

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offensive. Lesser individuals were mentioned, including Colonel General (now Marshal) Vasilevsky who, according to the broadcast, was sent "by the Party." Khrushchev's part in the battle of Stalingrad, as a member of the Stalingrad military council, was played up as it had been on previous occasions.¹ Incidentally, the name of Malenkov, who had been sent by the State Defense Committee to Stalingrad, was also ignored.

1/ There has been some build-up of Khrushchev's role as a political officer in the last war. In the past it had been customary to give the State Defense Committee credit for victory, listing its contribution ahead of the work of the political generals. The first variation in the official order of precedence was noted in March 1954; TRUD, on the anniversary of Stalin's death, stated that the Central Committee, without mentioning the State Defense Committee, send Comrades Bulganin, Zhdanov, Shcherbakov, Khrushchev, and others to direct military work. The same four were named in December 1954. This may have been an attempt to undermine the prestige of Malenkov, who was a member of the State Defense Committee, while Khrushchev was not. On 2 February 1955, on the 12th anniversary of the victory of Stalingrad, a Pravda article ignored all military heroes; besides Stalin, only Khrushchev was singled out and personally associated with victory.

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F. Probable Appearance of Military Groupings:

It has been speculated that Khrushchev may be attempting to fractionalize the loyalties of the military by building up his own clique among the professional class, in contrast to those who might be called Zhukov's followers.¹ The background of officers promoted in rank or position since the fall of Malenkov has therefore been examined for evidence on the following points: (1) past association with Khrushchev or Konev; (2) evidence of more than usual Party activity; (3) indications of Ukrainian ties.

Of the eleven officers promoted to the rank of Marshal on 11 March 1955, evidence would indicate that three possibly have loyalties to Khrushchev and Konev; there is a slight possibility that two more owe such allegiance. Of the remaining five, it is impossible to advance an opinion regarding four of them, but the fifth has strong war-time ties to Zhukov. No generalization as to allegiance can be made in regard to the officer promoted at the same time to Army General. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The limitations of attempting to line up followers by the above-mentioned criteria are recognized; nevertheless, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] the fact that some of these officers

^{1/} It is impossible to isolate Zhukov's followers on the basis of association. During the last war he came in contact either directly or indirectly with every prominent officer and, during his period of eclipse after the war, his influence would not have been felt in the assignment or promotion of officers. The allegiance that he commands would date primarily from the wartime and post-Stalin periods.

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were promoted in place of men of equal or greater qualifications, suggest that some political influence was exerted on their behalf. There was observed a rather close interrelationship of war-time ties among those promoted.

Promoted officers who are considered possibly to favor Khrushchev and Konev are:

-- K. S. Moskalenko, Marshal of SU, Commander of Moscow Military District and Commander of Moscow Garrison;

-- A. A. Grechko, Marshal of SU, Commander, Soviet Forces in Germany;

-- S. S. Varentsov, Marshal of Artillery, probably Chief of Main Artillery Directorate.

Promoted officers whose careers indicate a slight possibility of allegiance to Khrushchev and Konev are:

-- A. I. Yeremenko, Marshal of SU, Commander, North Caucasus Military District;

-- I. K. Bagramyan, Marshal of SU, position unknown.

Promoted officers whose allegiance, if any, cannot be determined:

-- V. I. Chuikov, Marshal of SU, Kiev Military District.

-- S. S. Biryuzov, Marshal of SU, position unknown, possibly PVO chief.

-- P. F. Zhigarev, Chief Marshal of Aviation, Commander in Chief of Military Air Force;

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-- S. I. Rudenko, Marshal of Aviation,
Chief of Staff of Military Air Force;

-- V. A. Sudets, Marshal of Aviation,
position unknown.

Promoted officer with major wartime ties to
Zhukov:

-- V. I. Kazakov, Marshal of Artillery,
Deputy Commander in Chief of Main Directorate of
Artillery Troops.

[redacted] Konev's
subordinates during and after the war have risen,
possibly through his influence. These officers
include:

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-- A. S. Zheltov, Colonel General,
Chief, Chief Political Directorate;

-- G. K. Malandin, Army General, Chief
of Staff, Ground Troops, and Deputy Chief of General
Staff.

-- A. S. Zhadov, Colonel General,
formerly Commander in Chief, Central Group of Forces;
now possibly a deputy to Konev.

-- V. V. Kurasov, Army General, Com-
mandant, Voroshilov Military Academy.¹

Of those high officers who have advanced
in position since 11 March 1955, the advancements of
Konev and Marshal V. D. Sokolovsky are the most
significant. Konev's rise has been discussed.

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The Soviet press revealed in April 1955 that Sokolovsky is now a first deputy Minister of Defense and Chief of the General Staff of the Army and Navy. Sokolovsky, a brilliant staff officer and army commander, was Konev's chief of staff in the drive across Poland; he was relieved before the Frankfurt/Berlin breakthrough, apparently to be Zhukov's staff co-ordinator for the Berlin operation. He replaced Zhukov in 1946 as commander of the Soviet Forces in Germany and as chairman, Soviet Element, Allied Control Council, Berlin. Western officers in Berlin found him intelligent, hard, and skillful in carrying out Soviet policy, in which he was a convinced believer. It was under his direction that the Soviets instituted the Berlin blockade.

He became first deputy Minister of the Armed Forces for General Affairs in March 1949, which position he retained after the separation of the Armed Forces Ministry into the War and Navy Ministries. In 1953, he was identified as chief of the General Staff and a deputy minister of war.

An apparent favorite of Stalin, he was elected a full member of the Central Committee, CPSU, in October 1952. It is impossible to ally him to any military or political grouping.

Of the six new military district commanders in the western USSR, four have major wartime ties to Zhukov; this is also true of the officer who has been recently named chairman of the central committee of DOSAAF (All-Union Society for Cooperation with the Army, Aviation, and the Navy), the Soviet para-military and civil defense organization. [redacted]

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[redacted] Newly assigned officers with probable major Zhukov associations include:

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-- A. V. Gorbатов, Colonel General, Commander, Baltic Military District;

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-- I. I. Fedyuninski, Colonel General,
Commander, Transcaucasus Military District;

-- A. I. Radzievski, Colonel General,
Commander, Odessa Military District;

-- V. Ya. Kolpakchi, Colonel General,
Commander, Northern Military District;

-- P. A. Belov, Colonel General,
Chairman, Central Committee, DOSAAF.

In attempting to outline the possibilities of groupings or cliques within the military establishments, two other recent developments must be taken into account. The first, already discussed, is the singling out by certain military leaders in the spring of 1955 of the select grouping of Party leaders who allegedly contributed most to winning World War II. Konev, Bagramyan and Zheltov were chief among the military leaders who chose or were chosen to perform this service for Khrushchev and Bulganin.

Second, a curious public airing of military doctrinal problems apparently came to a head in March, April and May 1955, during which period important military leaders made statements regarding the significance of surprise attack and nuclear weapons in modern war. The question of the impact of surprise in war goes back to Stalin's assertion following the early German victories in 1941 that surprise was not one of those factors which determine the final outcome of war. Some re-examination of this theory has been evident since the year of Stalin's death, but it now appears that an entire reworking of the theory has occurred and has been brought to light in recent Soviet publications. The full implications of this re-examination are not clear, particularly since it has been interwoven with vigilance propaganda, assertions of Soviet nuclear strength, and the debate over the consequences of atomic war touched off by Malenkov in 1954.

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In public statements, different military leaders have exhibited a variety of approaches to the problems of surprise attack and nuclear warfare. In 1954, Vasilevsky and Bulganin called for heightened vigilance and preparedness to use all weapons in case of surprise attack, but it was not until after Malenkov's demotion that the first hints were issued that atomic surprise, because of its decisiveness, might be a valid general principle of modern war. Sokolovsky wrote on 23 February 1955 that the aggressor must be deprived of the element of surprise and that one must "not allow oneself to be caught unawares." On 24 March, Marshal of Tank Troops Rotmistrov publicly called for a re-examination of Soviet military science, declaring that "in certain circumstances a surprise assault using atomic and hydrogen weapons may be one of the decisive conditions of success, not only in the initial period of a war but in its entire course.

The possible results of such a war have been alluded to by several military leaders. Zhukov and Vasilevsky have publicly warned of the heavy losses in life and property that would be visited upon both sides. In contrast to this relatively realistic appreciation, Konev and Lt. Gen. Shatilov (deputy head of the Chief Political Directorate under Zheltov) have avoided indicating the mutually destructive power of nuclear weapons, the latter warning the West to "remember well that atomic weapons as well as suddenness of action are double-edged weapons." Bagramyan stressed Soviet invincibility by repeating Molotov's 8 February 1955 claim of Soviet superiority over the US in hydrogen weapons and called for the Soviet armed forces to "nip in the bud every striving of the aggressors to carry out a surprise attack on our Soviet motherland."

Although little has been said publicly on the subject since May, the problem was left without any clear resolution in Soviet military circles of the question of whether or not atomic war implies

mutual destruction. For the purposes of this paper, however, it must suffice to point out that different military leaders have since 1954 publicly adopted quite divergent views on a key question.¹

G. Conclusions Regarding Control of the Military and Military Groupings:

In summary, the traditional Party and security controls apparently remain as effective as in the past, with a note of subtlety and latitude appearing in the method of Party control. Defense Minister Zhukov is well under Party control, but as insurance against too much influence or independence on his part, two developments have appeared: (1) The build-up of Konev, possibly a counterweight; and (2) the possible appearance of a military grouping whose first loyalties might be to other than Zhukov. It is not to be inferred that the military leadership is divided into pro-Konev and pro-Zhukov camps; there are undoubtedly many independents who command loyalties of their own. But it does appear that groupings do exist within the top military hierarchy, arising from factors including patronage within the military establishment, associations with and support for political leaders, and divergent views on strategic questions. Konev figures in one way or another in much of the material on these groupings, probably in part because of his recent prominence and because of the greater difficulty in identifying Zhukov's associations. At the present time, the most that could be said of such groupings is that they would detract somewhat from Zhukov's pre-eminence. The suggestion is strong,

however, that in continuing future study of the political position of the top Soviet military hierarchy, Konev and his associates must be watched closely as potential key figures in political intrigue.

V. Probable Influence of Military on Soviet Policy:

At present the military enjoy their greatest prestige since the war; their influence has grown with each crisis since the death of Stalin. Nevertheless, it not to be implied that the military are playing a decisive political role, for as before mentioned no representative of the professional officer class is on the major policy-making bodies of the USSR.

The influence of the military remains indirect rather than direct, but the prestige of the military in the USSR has become such that indirect influence can be more easily exerted than before. Their favored position indicates that military leaders are no longer viewed with the suspicion and distrust that was their postwar lot under Stalin.

The influence of the military must be exercised from within the Soviet ruling group, rather than from the outside. The political control apparatus in the armed forces would seem to prevent the military from adopting an independent position on a question and then successfully seeking support for their viewpoint outside Party circles.

It is probable that the greatest influence of the military leadership is exerted in the personal relationships between military personalities and members of the Soviet political leadership, and only those officers whose loyalty to the regime and leadership were beyond question would be in a position to exercise this privilege.

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